

Refugee Service Gaps January 6, 2007

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The following gaps in refugee services were identified during public meetings held in March and May 2006. Refugees, refugee services providers, and other community representatives were represented at these meetings.

➤ Language Barriers

- Need more trained and paid interpreters (oral) and translators (written)
 - There is a shortage of interpreters, especially for more remote languages
 - Need additional resources to train general and specialized interpreters and translators
- Lack of English language skills training
 - Some refugees are arriving illiterate in their own language which makes the acquisition of English language skills more difficult
 - Family Employment Program (FEP) participation requirements are too restrictive and should allow for more ESL training time
 - Competing needs, participation requirements
 - Additional resources needed in K-12 for ESL services
 - Need for maintaining and increased funding
 - Access, outreach, delivery of ESL services – transportation, home base,
- Need to improve communication between refugees, service providers and government agencies
 - There is a general lack of understanding of available services, who they serve, and how to access them

➤ Case Management

- Longer periods of case management are needed to ensure refugees are connecting with appropriate services after initial resettlement period.
- Lack of case management by professionals within the refugee population for continued assistance or increased cultural competency of case managers
 - Language barriers within the refugee professionals
 - Need to match language with the refugee client
- Physical and mental health issues from war trauma are longer lasting and need extended services not currently available
- Medicaid coverage is too limited (amount of time and services available)
 - Increase application response time
 - Need dental and vision
 - Need primary care provider (medical home)
 - Lack of time for enrollment for PCN and CHIP (open enrollment and caps)
 - Lack of communication structure/outreach
- Access to health care
- Child care
- Housing needs
- Need for mentors assisting case managers
- Need a flow chart, documentation of process, access to systems
- Need more pro bono professional services in diverse areas for the refugee population to address long-term successful resettlement in Utah. E.g. services for women, legal representation, higher education, home ownership plan, etc.

➤ Employment and Self-Sufficiency

- Refugees need help entering employment with higher wages so basic family needs can be met.
- Additional education and training is needed for career advancement and wage progression
- Simultaneous available employment / skills training
- Refugees face language barriers in the workplace
 - Many employers are not willing or are unable to accommodate language needs

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- Lack of acceptance and acknowledgement of foreign education, especially higher education degrees, certification, and credentials by employers.
- Physical and mental health issues may be barriers to employment
- Lack of cultural competency in the workplace
- Lack of resources and education for refugee women, women's issues
- Will refugees be able to choose Match Grant?
- Demand for services is greater than current resources
 - Funding is inadequate to meet the needs of the refugees being resettled in Salt Lake area and in Utah
 - Federal resources are time limited for individual support
 - There is a lack of mentors and volunteers who could help refugees navigate government systems or access other services
 - Lack of education of volunteers
 - Lack of coordination of volunteers
 - Lack of understanding what services are available
 - Many refugee services providers lack the training, experience, and capacity to serve the refugee communities (capacity building)
 - Government can't do it alone
 - Lack of partnership between government and private resources
 - Involve new partners i.e. Latino community
 - Involve foundations
 - Lack of resources for elderly refugees at risk or have lost federal benefits, particularly SSI
 - Lack of uniformity of services
 - Lack of resource guide who does what,
 - Need asset mapping
 - Lack of interaction between refugee program and the legislative body and governor's office (GOPB), local government
 - Lack of refugee civic participation
 - Lack of legislative awareness of refugees
 - Lack of involvement of Ethnic Minority offices
- List of core values/problems
 - Access
 - Inclusion
 - Empowerment
 - Respect
 - Cultural sensitivity
 - Lack of involvement of refugee community
 - Lack of cooperation between refugees and services providers
 - Lack of single point of contact for all
 - Need refugee 'czar'
 - Need funding
 - Empowered
 - Central office
 - Accountable
 - Staff
 - Volunteer coordination
 - Lack of accountability
 - Program
 - Service providers
 - Need to share outcomes
 - Lack of a feedback process from refugees
- Community development and preservation

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- Refugee community needs gathering places/space to reconnect and become a community again
- Lack of small business opportunities or micro-enterprise development
- Refugees need time, tools, and opportunities to maintain their artistic and cultural traditions and heritage
- Media, Education of public, cultural sensitivity, cultural competency
 - Refugee vs immigrant
 - How does a refugee arrive
- World Refugee Day
- Lack of a conflict resolution system within the community
 - Using community resources to educate and resolve issues
- Many refugee community groups lack the training, experience, and capacity to serve their communities (capacity building)
 - Need mechanism to empower
- Lack of empowerment of the refugee communities for community education on laws, housing, (train the trainer), domestic violence, youth issues, women issues, contract law
- Positive contact with police/ education
- Cultural competency of general community of refugees and community
- Youth services
 - Services for youth services, cultural competency of providers
 - Cultural sensitivity of DCFS
 - Need supplemental education services
 - Need parent/child/school communication
 - Cross cultural competencies
 - Gang and crime prevention
 - Need services to address more severe youth and family issues
 - Need solutions to address generation gaps
- Transportation services
 - Car, insurance, maintenance,
 - Public transportation
 - Need for reduced bus passes
 - Medical appointments
- Coordination with non-refugee and other ethnic minority communities for resources
 - Lack of inclusion of refugee issues with all immigrants in the overall discussion of economic and community development.
 - The idea that refugee services are separate from other immigrant tends to have a narrow political relevance and minimize collaborations.
- Lack of a statewide vision of what constitutes good resettlement policy
 - Consulting the refugee communities on what is needed, how to solve issues
 - Refugees taking ownership of resettlement
 - Refugee conference
 - Refugee service policy development
 - There is a lack of state, county, or city positions on refugee services
 - Scope and priority of services are dictated by policy and federal mandates
 - Federal policy on TANF and other federal programs does not allow refugees to have adequate hours in English classes in order to qualify for benefits